

# Draft Environmental Assessment



## Gartside Fishing Access Site Fishing Pier Replacement Project

August 2006



**Montana Fish,  
Wildlife & Parks**

Gartside

Fishing Access Site

# Fishing Pier Replacement Project Draft Environmental Assessment MEPA, NEPA, MCA 23-1-110 CHECKLIST

## PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

1. **Type of proposed state action:** Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) proposes to repair the damaged fishing pier at Gartside Fishing Access Site (FAS)
2. **Agency authority for the proposed action:** The 1977 Montana Legislature enacted statute 87-1-605, which directs Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) to acquire, develop and operate a system of fishing accesses. The legislature established an earmarked funding account to ensure that this fishing access site function would be established.
3. **Name of project:** Gartside Fishing Access Site Fishing Pier Replacement Project
4. **Name, address and phone number of project sponsor (if other than the agency):** Montana Fish, Wildlife, & Parks is the project sponsor.
5. **Construction Timeline:**  
Estimated Construction/Commencement Date: Fall 2007  
Estimated Completion Date: Fall 2007  
Current Status of Project Design (% complete): 50
6. **Location affected by proposed action (county, range and township):**  
Gartside FAS is located in Richland County, Township 21 N, Range 58 E, Sections 15 and 16.

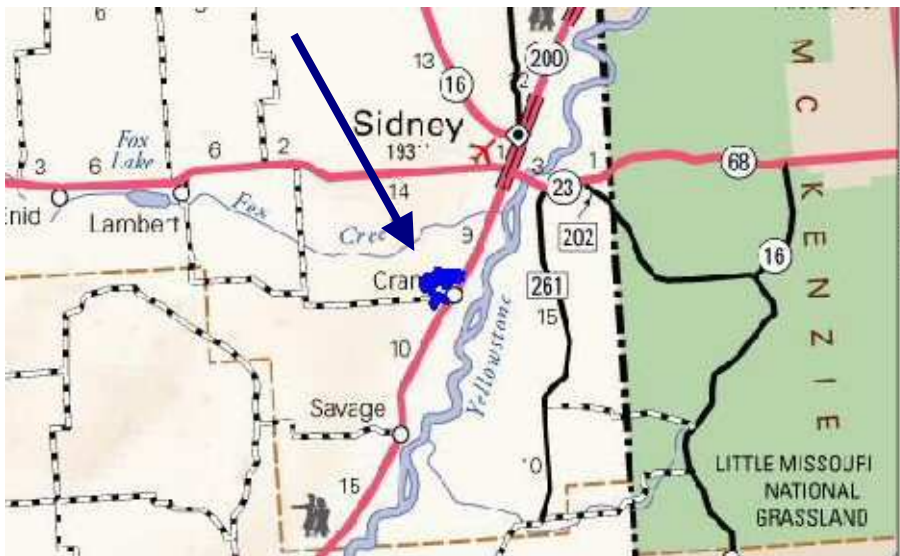


Figure 1. Area map of Gartside FAS.

**7. Project size -- estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected that are currently:**

	<u>Acres</u>		<u>Acres</u>
(a) Developed:		(d) Floodplain	<u>0</u>
Residential	<u>0</u>		
Industrial	<u>0</u>	(e) Productive:	
(b) Open Space/Woodlands/Recreation	<u>1</u>	Irrigated cropland	<u>0</u>
(c) Wetlands/Riparian Areas	<u>0</u>	Dry cropland	<u>0</u>
		Forestry	<u>0</u>
		Rangeland	<u>0</u>
		Other	<u>0</u>

**8. Listing of any other Local, State or Federal agency that has overlapping or additional jurisdiction.**

**(a) Permits:** permits will be filed at least 2 months prior to project start.

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Permit</u>
Montana Dept of Fish, Wildlife & Parks	SPA 124
Montana Dept of Natural Resources and Conservation	310
Montana Dept of Environmental Quality	318
US Corps of Engineers	Section 404
US Corps of Engineers	Section 10

**(b) Funding:**

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Funding Amount</u>
Fish, Wildlife & Parks	\$16,500

**(c) Other Overlapping or Additional Jurisdictional Responsibilities:**

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Type of Responsibility</u>
NA	

**8. Narrative summary of the proposed action or project including the benefits and purpose of the proposed action:**

Gartside FAS is located on the west end of Gartside Reservoir one mile north of Crane, MT on Hwy 16 in Richland County (see figures 1 & 2). This 110-acre impoundment on Crane Creek offers good fishing for bluegill, walleye, and northern pike in a pleasant area in eastern Montana. Cottonwood trees dot the shoreline, and the smaller size of the reservoir keeps waves small. Only non-motorized boating is permitted on the reservoir. Consequently, there is no disturbance to visitors from motorboats and personal water crafts, making the FAS an enjoyable place to picnic, boat, and fish.

The facilities at the FAS currently include picnic tables, fire rings, and an ADA-accessible configuration of parking spaces, vault toilet, and a concrete sidewalk (see figure 3). Included in this arrangement was an ADA-accessible fishing pier, but this has been damaged and is currently unusable. The damaged pier consisted of a concrete platform with a steel railing around it that rested on a concrete jersey barrier. Severe weather in the winter of 2005 weakened the pier, and heavy ice in late winter 2006 finally knocked the jersey barrier down, causing the platform to tilt down at a sharp angle and separate from the walkway (see figure 4).

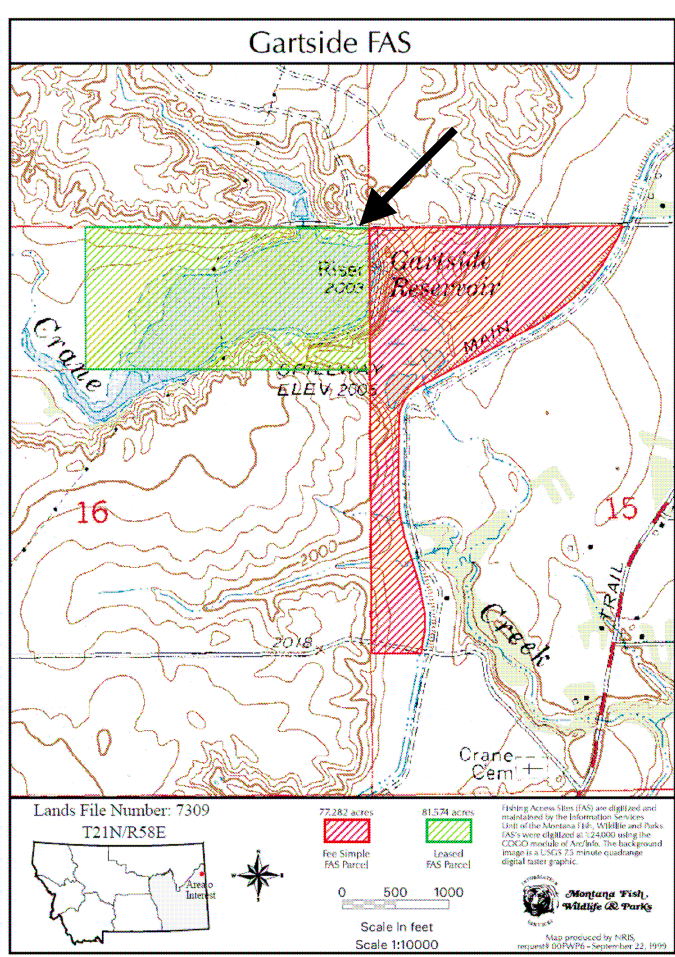


Figure 2. Site map of Gartside FAS. The approximate location of the fishing pier is shown by the arrow.

Gartside FAS had 596 angler days in 2001, and 1905 angler days in 2003, the year the fishing pier was completed. The reasons for this large boost in visitation numbers are not documented, but it is likely that at least some of the increase was due to the addition of the pier and other improvements such as the vault toilet and sidewalks, as a large majority of the public appreciates and uses such amenities.

Montana FWP engineers propose replacing the damaged pier with a modified structure that would withstand ice movement on the reservoir. The most significant aspect of the new design is the creation of a small spit that would be constructed out of fill from the reservoir bed. Staff engineers propose pulling material in from the sides to construct the spit and deepen the water around the pier to improve the fishing in the immediate



vicinity. The spit will extend the pier by 20', and would support the pier and part of the sidewalk. The sides of the spit would be sloped at an appropriate angle and covered with cable mat, which would provide additional support and limit erosion of the fill in to the reservoir. Cable matting consists of small blocks of concrete bound together by a strand of cable, and is commonly used on highway and bridge projects as an erosion control measure. The pier would be anchored at the far end with footings and abutments, and should be extremely stable and sturdy. The extension of the pier into the reservoir would provide better fishing opportunities for users than the old pier did, in addition to being more resistant to damage from ice-gouging. The sidewalk would also be extended to the edge of the new pier, re-creating a seamless ADA-pathway between the parking area, latrine, and fishing pier. The level of the reservoir would be lowered to accommodate the construction.

In summary, the proposed project will have no significant environmental impacts and will provide a unique recreational opportunity for people with disabilities in the local area.



Figure 3. Photo showing the ADA-accessible parking space, latrine, sidewalk, and pier.



Figure 4. The damaged fishing pier.

## **PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

- 1. Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the no action alternative) to the proposed action whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider and a discussion of how the alternatives would be implemented:**

### **Alternative A: No Action**

If no action is taken, the fishing pier will remain unusable and disabled users would be very limited in the number of recreational choices open to them at Gartside FAS, and further limited in the wider Region 7 area. The only other FWP-managed site in Region 7 that has an ADA-accessible fishing pier is Twelve-Mile Dam FAS. However, that FAS is located on the Tongue River, 128 miles south of this site, and does not provide the same angling opportunities that the Gartside FAS does. Fishing facilities and opportunities at other FWP-managed sites within Region 7 are generally rated “Difficult” or “Moderate”.

### **Alternative B: Proposed Action**

Note: a detailed evaluation of the Proposed Action is included in Part VI. Environmental Review Checklist beginning on page 9.

In the preferred Alternative, FWP would replace the damaged ADA-accessible fishing pier at Gartside Reservoir FAS with a design that would better withstand the icy conditions common on the reservoir in winter. This is the preferred alternative because FWP is committed to providing accessible recreational opportunities for disabled users, and the damaged fishing pier at Gartside was part of an ADA-accessible system that included the pier, sidewalks, latrine, and parking area. In addition, the fishing pier was popular and heavily used by people in the surrounding communities, and FWP staff is eager to offer this amenity to the public again for their use and enjoyment.

- 2. Evaluation and listing of mitigation, stipulation, or other control measures enforceable by the agency or another government agency:**

There are no formal stipulations of mitigation or other controls associated with the proposed action. This action does not involve any permits or granting of a license on which stipulations would be placed.

## **PART III. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT**

This EA did not reveal any significant negative impacts to the physical and human environment stemming from the proposed action. No threatened or endangered species would be affected, and no unique or physical features would be disturbed. The ADA-accessible fishing pier provided valued recreational opportunities for visitors to the site, and the public has been hopeful that it could be repaired so they can use it again. In short, the proposed project would considerably increase visitor enjoyment of the site without causing significant adverse affects to the environment.

## **PART IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

- 1. Describe the level of public involvement for this project if any, and, given the complexity and the seriousness of the environmental issues associated with the proposed action, is the level of public involvement appropriate under the circumstances?**

The public will be notified by way of a statewide press release, legal notices in the Miles City Star and the Helena Independent Record, and by public notice on the Fish, Wildlife & Parks web page:

<http://fwp.mt.gov/publicnotices>. Individual notices will be sent to the region's standard EA distribution list and to those that have requested one.

### **Duration of comment period:**

A 30-day comment period is proposed. This level of public involvement is appropriate for this scale of project.

## **PART V. EA PREPARATION**

- 1. Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required? (YES/NO)? If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action.**

Based on an evaluation of the primary, secondary, and cumulative impacts to the physical and human environment under the Montana Environmental Protection Act (MEPA), this environmental review found no significant impacts from the proposed fishing pier replacement project. In determining the significance of the impacts, FWP assessed the severity, duration, geographic extent, and frequency of the impact, the probability that the impact would occur or reasonable assurance that the impact would not occur, growth-inducing or growth inhibiting aspects of the impact, the importance to the state and to society of the environmental resource or value affected, and precedent that would be set as a result of the proposed action that would commit FWP to future actions; and potential conflicts with local, federal, or state laws. Therefore, an EA is the appropriate level of review and an EIS is not required.

- 2. Name, title, address and phone number of the person(s) responsible for preparing the EA:**

Allan Kuser  
FAS Coordinator  
1420 East Sixth Ave  
Helena, MT 59601  
(406)444-7885

John Little  
Park Manager  
PO Box 1630  
Miles City, MT 59301  
(406)234-0923

Linnaea Schroeer-Smith  
Independent Contractor  
1027 9<sup>th</sup> Ave  
Helena, MT 59601  
(406)495-9620

**3. List of agencies consulted during preparation of the EA:**

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Parks Division

Wildlife Division

Fisheries Division

Design & Construction Bureau

Lands Division

Montana State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)

Montana Department of Commerce – Tourism

Montana Natural Heritage Program – Natural Resources Information System (NRIS)



## PART VI. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CHECKLIST

### 3. Evaluation of the impacts of the Proposed Action including secondary and cumulative impacts on the Physical and Human Environment.

#### A. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

1. <u>LAND RESOURCES</u>  Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. **Soil instability or changes in geologic substructure?		X				1a.
b. Disruption, displacement, erosion, compaction, moisture loss, or over-covering of soil, which would reduce productivity or fertility?			X			1b
c. **Destruction, covering or modification of any unique geologic or physical features?		X				1c.
d. Changes in siltation, deposition or erosion patterns that may modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed or shore of a lake?			X			1d.
e. Exposure of people or property to earthquakes, landslides, ground failure, or other natural hazard?		X				
f. Other:		X				

**Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):**

- 1a. The removal of the damaged fishing pier and installation of the new one would not affect geologic substructure or soil stability.
- 1b. Soil would be disturbed during removal of the old pier and installation of the new pier and the extension of the sidewalk, but the effects would be small. No previously undisturbed ground would be disturbed by this project.
- 1c. No unique geologic features would be destroyed, covered, or modified by the proposed action.
- 1d. The small spit of land that will be constructed to support the new pier will potentially contribute some siltation in the immediate vicinity of the pier. Cablemat will be placed over the exposed sideslopes of the spit to significantly limit such erosion and resulting siltation.

\* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

\*\* Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

\*\*\* Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

\*\*\*\* Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

2. <u>AIR</u>  Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. **Emission of air pollutants or deterioration of ambient air quality? (Also see 13 (c).)			X			2a.
b. Creation of objectionable odors?		X				
c. Alteration of air movement, moisture, or temperature patterns or any change in climate, either locally or regionally?		X				
d. Adverse effects on vegetation, including crops, due to increased emissions of pollutants?		X				
e. ***For P-R/D-J projects, will the project result in any discharge, which will conflict with federal or state air quality regs? (Also see 2a.)						
f. Other:		X				

**Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Air Resources (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):**

- 2a. Minor and temporary dust and vehicle emissions will be created by heavy equipment during construction, but would end after completion of the project.

\* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

\*\* Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

\*\*\* Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

\*\*\*\* Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

3. <b><u>WATER</u></b>  Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated*	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. *Discharge into surface water or any alteration of surface water quality including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen or turbidity?			X			1a.
b. Changes in drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface runoff?		X				
c. Alteration of the course or magnitude of floodwater or other flows?		X				
d. Changes in the amount of surface water in any water body or creation of a new water body?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to water related hazards such as flooding?		X				
f. Changes in the quality of groundwater?		X				
g. Changes in the quantity of groundwater?		X				
h. Increase in risk of contamination of surface or groundwater?		X				
i. Effects on any existing water right or reservation?		X				
j. Effects on other water users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quality?		X				
k. Effects on other users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quantity?		X				
l. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project affect a designated floodplain? (Also see 3c.)						
m. ***For P-R/D-J, will the project result in any discharge that will affect federal or state water quality regulations? (Also see 3a.)						
n. Other:		X				

**Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Water Resources (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):**

- 3a. The proposed action will cause a small increase in turbidity in the vicinity of the fishing pier during removal and installation, but would largely end after completion of the project. There might be some periods of slight turbidity in the immediate vicinity of the pier due to slight erosion of the spit of land that would support the new pier. These small, localized increases in turbidity are not expected to alter temperature or dissolved oxygen levels in the reservoir.

\* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

\*\* Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

\*\*\* Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

\*\*\*\* Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

4. <b>VEGETATION</b>  Will the proposed action result in?	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. Changes in the diversity, productivity or abundance of plant species (including trees, shrubs, grass, crops, and aquatic plants)?			X			4a.
b. Alteration of a plant community?			X			4b.
c. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				4c.
d. Reduction in acreage or productivity of any agricultural land?		X				
e. Establishment or spread of noxious weeds?		X				
f. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project affect wetlands, or prime and unique farmland?						
g. Other:		X				

**Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Vegetation (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):4a.**

- 4a. The proposed construction of the spit, footings and abutments for the new fishing pier will disturb any aquatic plants in the immediate vicinity of the pier and terrestrial plants such as grasses in the area where the sidewalk would be extended. However, the effects of these actions do not constitute significant or potentially significant changes to the diversity, productivity, or abundance of plant species in the area.
- 4b. Please see comment 4a.
- 4c. There are no documented observations of any threatened or endangered plant species within the proposed project site or the larger Gartside Reservoir FAS area. A search of the Montana Natural Heritage Database showed 2 plant species of concern that might occur in or near the proposed project area. None of these species would be adversely affected by the proposed project because all construction would occur over previously disturbed ground, which does not contain populations of those species of concern. Please see Appendix 2 for a complete discussion of sensitive species found in the Gartside FAS area.

\* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

\*\* Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

\*\*\* Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

\*\*\*\* Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

<b>** 5. FISH/WILDLIFE</b>  <b>Will the proposed action result in:</b>	<b>IMPACT *</b>				<b>Can Impact Be Mitigated *</b>	<b>Comment Index</b>
	<b>Unknown *</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>Minor *</b>	<b>Potentially Significant</b>		
a. Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat?		X				
b. Changes in the diversity or abundance of game animals or bird species?		X				
c. Changes in the diversity or abundance of nongame species?		X				
d. Introduction of new species into an area?		X				
e. Creation of a barrier to the migration or movement of animals?		X				
f. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				5f.
g. Increase in conditions that stress wildlife populations or limit abundance (including harassment, legal or illegal harvest or other human activity)?		x				
h. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project be performed in any area in which T&E species are present, and will the project affect any T&E species or their habitat? (Also see 5f.)						
i. ***For P-R/D-J, will the project introduce or export any species not presently or historically occurring in the receiving location? (Also see 5d.)						
j. Other:		X				

**Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Fish and Wildlife (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):**

- 5f. A search of the Montana Natural Heritage Database showed one endangered species of wildlife and 5 wildlife species of concern that might occur in or near the proposed project area. All of the species of concern, including the one endangered species, the Pallid Sturgeon (*Scaphirhynchus albus*) occur in the Yellowstone River but are not found in Gartside Reservoir, and therefore would not be affected by the proposed project. Please see Appendix 2 for a complete discussion of sensitive species found in the Gartside FAS area.

\* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

\*\* Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

\*\*\* Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

\*\*\*\* Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.



## B. HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

6. <u>NOISE/ELECTRICAL EFFECTS</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. Increases in existing noise levels?			X			6a.
b. Exposure of people to serve or nuisance noise levels?		X				
c. Creation of electrostatic or electromagnetic effects that could be detrimental to human health or property?		X				
d. Interference with radio or television reception and operation?		X				
e. Other:		X				

**Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Noise/Electrical Effects (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):**

- 6a. There will be a temporary increase in noise level during removal of the old pier and installation of the spit, footing, abutment, and sidewalks, but would end after completion of the project.

\* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

\*\* Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

\*\*\* Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

\*\*\*\* Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

7. <b>LAND USE</b>  Will the proposed action result in:	<b>IMPACT *</b>				<b>Can Impact Be Mitigated *</b>	<b>Comment Index</b>
	<b>Unknown *</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>Minor *</b>	<b>Potentially Significant</b>		
a. Alteration of or interference with the productivity or profitability of the existing land use of an area?		X				7a.
b. Conflict with a designated natural area or area of unusual scientific or educational importance?		X				
c. Conflict with any existing land use whose presence would constrain or potentially prohibit the proposed action?		X				
d. Adverse effects on or relocation of residences?		X				
e. Other:		X				

**Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Use (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):**

7a. There will be no alteration or interference with the existing land use in the greater Gartside FAS area.

\* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

\*\* Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

\*\*\* Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

\*\*\*\* Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

8. <b>RISK/HEALTH HAZARDS</b>  Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. Risk of an explosion or release of hazardous substances (including, but not limited to oil, pesticides, chemicals, or radiation) in the event of an accident or other forms of disruption?		X				8a.
b. Affect an existing emergency response or emergency evacuation plan, or create a need for a new plan?		X				
c. Creation of any human health hazard or potential hazard?		X				
d. ***For P-R/D-J, will any chemical toxicants be used? (Also see 8a)						
e. Other:		X				

**Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Risk/Health Hazards (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):**

8a. The proposed action will not create any foreseeable risks or health hazards.

\* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

\*\* Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

\*\*\* Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

\*\*\*\* Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

9. <b>COMMUNITY IMPACT</b>  Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. Alteration of the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area?		X				9a.
b. Alteration of the social structure of a community?		X				
c. Alteration of the level or distribution of employment or community or personal income?		X				
d. Changes in industrial or commercial activity?		X				
e. Increased traffic hazards or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods?		X				
f. Other:		X				

**Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Community Impact (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):**

- 9a. It is unlikely that the proposed project would have any discernable effect on the community surrounding Gartside FAS.

\* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

\*\* Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

\*\*\* Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

\*\*\*\* Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

10. <u>PUBLIC SERVICES/TAXES/UTILITIES</u>  Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. Will the proposed action have an effect upon or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas: fire or police protection, schools, parks/recreational facilities, roads or other public maintenance, water supply, sewer or septic systems, solid waste disposal, health, or other governmental services? If any, specify:		X				10a.
b. Will the proposed action have an effect upon the local or state tax base and revenues?		X				
c. Will the proposed action result in a need for new facilities or substantial alterations of any of the following utilities: electric power, natural gas, other fuel supply or distribution systems, or communications?		X				
d. Will the proposed action result in increased use of any energy source?		X				
e. **Define projected revenue sources						10e.
f. **Define projected maintenance costs.						10f.
g. Other:		X				

**Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Public Services/Taxes/Utilities (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):**

10a. The proposed action would not have an effect upon or result in a need for new or altered governmental services.

10e. The cost of the project is estimated at \$16,500. Funding would come from FAS (capitol major maintenance funds). Breakdown Costs are as follows:

- Excavation and Compaction: \$2,125
- Footing and Abutment: \$2,300
- Concrete Sidewalk 12' x 24': \$3,822
- Cablemat Placement: \$6,912
- Remove and Replace Pier: \$1250.

10f. There would be no future additional maintenance costs associated with this project.

\* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

\*\* Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

\*\*\* Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

\*\*\*\* Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.



<b>** 11. <u>AESTHETICS/RECREATION</u></b>  <b>Will the proposed action result in:</b>	<b>IMPACT *</b>				<b>Can Impact Be Mitigated *</b>	<b>Comment Index</b>
	<b>Unknown *</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>Minor *</b>	<b>Potentially Significant</b>		
a. Alteration of any scenic vista or creation of an aesthetically offensive site or effect that is open to public view?		X				
b. Alteration of the aesthetic character of a community or neighborhood?		X				
c. **Alteration of the quality or quantity of recreational/tourism opportunities and settings? (Attach Tourism Report.)						11c.
d. ***For P-R/D-J, will any designated or proposed wild or scenic rivers, trails or wilderness areas be impacted? (Also see 11a, 11c.)						
e. Other:						

**Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Aesthetics/Recreation (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):**

11c. Please see Attachment A for Tourism Report

\* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

\*\* Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

\*\*\* Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

\*\*\*\* Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

12. <u>CULTURAL/HISTORICAL RESOURCES</u>  Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. **Destruction or alteration of any site, structure or object of prehistoric historic, or paleontological importance?		X				12a.
b. Physical change that would affect unique cultural values?		X				
c. Effects on existing religious or sacred uses of a site or area?		X				
d. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project affect historic or cultural resources? Attach SHPO letter of clearance. (Also see 12.a.)						
e. Other:		X				

**Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Cultural/Historical Resources (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):**

12a. The proposed project will not result in the destruction or alteration of any site, structure, or object of prehistoric, historic, or paleontological importance.

\* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

\*\* Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

\*\*\* Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

\*\*\*\* Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

## SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

13. <b>SUMMARY EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE</b>  Will the proposed action, considered as a whole:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (A project or program may result in impacts on two or more separate resources that create a significant effect when considered together or in total.)		X				13a.
b. Involve potential risks or adverse effects, which are uncertain but extremely hazardous if they were to occur?		X				
c. Potentially conflict with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard or formal plan?		X				
d. Establish a precedent or likelihood that future actions with significant environmental impacts will be proposed?		X				
e. Generate substantial debate or controversy about the nature of the impacts that would be created?		X				
f. ***For P-R/D-J, is the project expected to have organized opposition or generate substantial public controversy? (Also see 13e.)						
g. ****For P-R/D-J, list any federal or state permits required.						

**Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Significance Criteria (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):**

13a. This EA found no significant impacts to the human or physical environment from the proposed action.

\* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

\*\* Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

\*\*\* Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

\*\*\*\* Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

**APPENDIX 1**  
**HB495**  
**PROJECT QUALIFICATION CHECKLIST**

**Date** July 11, 2006

**Person Reviewing** Linnaea Schroeer-Smith

**Project Location:** Gartside Reservoir FAS, Richland Co. T21N, R58E, Sections 15 & 16.

**Description of Proposed Work:** Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks proposes replacing the damaged ADA-accessible fishing pier at Gartside Reservoir FAS with a sturdier design that would require footings and an abutment.

The following checklist is intended to be a guide for determining whether a proposed development or improvement is of enough significance to fall under HB 495 rules. (Please check ☐ all that apply and comment as necessary.)

- ☐ **A. New roadway or trail built over undisturbed land?**  
Comments: None
- ☐ **B. New building construction (buildings <100 sf and vault latrines exempt)?**  
Comments: None
- ☐ **C. Any excavation of 20 c.y. or greater?**  
Comments: None
- ☐ **D. New parking lots built over undisturbed land or expansion of existing lot that increases parking capacity by 25% or more?**  
Comments: None
- ☐ **E. Any new shoreline alteration that exceeds a double wide boat ramp or handicapped fishing station?**  
Comments: None.
- ☒ **F. Any new construction into lakes, reservoirs, or streams?**  
Comments: A small spit of land would be created that would support the new fishing pier, providing stability and better access to fish.
- ☐ **G. Any new construction in an area with National Registry quality cultural artifacts (as determined by State Historical Preservation Office)?**  
Comments: SHPO clearance has been obtained for the proposed project.

☐ H. **Any new above ground utility lines?**

Comments: None

☐ I. **Any increase or decrease in campsites of 25% or more of an existing number of campsites?**

Comments: None.

☐ J. **Proposed project significantly changes the existing features or use pattern; including effects of a series of individual projects?**

Comments: None

**If any of the above are checked, HB 495 rules apply to this proposed work and should be documented on the MEPA/HB495 CHECKLIST. Refer to MEPA/HB495 Cross Reference Summary for further assistance.**



## APPENDIX 2

### Sensitive Plants and Animals in the Gartside Reservoir FAS area.

A search of the Montana Natural Heritage Program (MNHP) element occurrence database ([nhp.nris.state.mt.us/eoportal](http://nhp.nris.state.mt.us/eoportal)) indicates no known occurrences of federally listed threatened, endangered, or proposed threatened or endangered plant or animal species in the proposed project site.

### Species of Concern Terms and Definitions

**Montana Species of Concern.** The term "**Species of Concern**" includes taxa that are at-risk or potentially at-risk due to rarity, restricted distribution, habitat loss, and/or other factors. The term also encompasses species that have a special designation by organizations or land management agencies in Montana, including: Bureau of Land Management Special Status and Watch species; U.S. Forest Service Sensitive and Watch species; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Threatened, Endangered and Candidate species.

#### ▼ **Status Ranks (Global and State)**

The international network of Natural Heritage Programs employs a standardized ranking system to denote global (**G** -- range-wide) and state status (**S**) (NatureServe 2003). Species are assigned numeric ranks ranging from 1 (critically imperiled) to 5 (demonstrably secure), reflecting the relative degree to which they are "at-risk". Rank definitions are given below. A number of factors are considered in assigning ranks -- the number, size and distribution of known "occurrences" or populations, population trends (if known), habitat sensitivity, and threat. Factors in a species' life history that make it especially vulnerable are also considered (e.g., dependence on a specific pollinator).

### Status Ranks

Code	Definition
<b>G1</b> <b>S1</b>	At high risk because of extremely limited and/or rapidly declining numbers, range, and/or habitat, making it highly vulnerable to global extinction or extirpation in the state.
<b>G2</b> <b>S2</b>	At risk because of very limited and/or declining numbers, range, and/or habitat, making it vulnerable to global extinction or extirpation in the state.
<b>G3</b> <b>S3</b>	Potentially at risk because of limited and/or declining numbers, range, and/or habitat, even though it may be abundant in some areas.
<b>G4</b> <b>S4</b>	Uncommon but not rare (although it may be rare in parts of its range), and usually widespread. Apparently not vulnerable in most of its range, but possibly cause for long-term concern.
<b>G5</b> <b>S5</b>	Common, widespread, and abundant (although it may be rare in parts of its range). Not vulnerable in most of its range.

### 1. *Scaphirhynchus albus* (Pallid Sturgeon)

State: **S1**  
Global: **G1**

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: LE  
U.S. Forest Service: **Endangered**  
U.S. Bureau of Land Management: **Special Status**

This endangered species is found in the Yellowstone River but not in Gartside Reservoir, so the proposed project would not affect this species.

### 2. *Zapus hudsonius* (Meadow Jumping Mouse)

Natural Heritage Ranks:  
State: **S2**  
Global: **G5**

Federal Agency Status:  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:  
U.S. Forest Service:  
U.S. Bureau of Land Management:

All disturbance associated with the proposed project would occur within 30 ft of the shoreline of Gartside Reservoir, which is bare soil and regularly walked or driven on by people in that area and is therefore unlikely to be habitat for this species.

### 3. *Sander canadensis* (Sauger).

Natural Heritage Ranks:  
State: **S2B**  
Global: **G4**

Federal Agency Status:  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:  
U.S. Forest Service:  
U.S. Bureau of Land Management: **Sensitive**

This sensitive species lives in the Yellowstone River but is not found in Gartside Reservoir, so the proposed project would not affect it.

### 4. *Aster ptarmicoides* (Prairie Aster).

Natural Heritage Ranks:  
State: **S2S3**  
Global: **G5**

Federal Agency Status:  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:  
U.S. Forest Service:  
U.S. Bureau of Land Management: **Sensitive**

This species has been documented in the Gartside Reservoir FAS area, but is not found along the shoreline where the proposed project would take place.

## 5. *Macrhybopsis gelida* (Sturgeon Chub).

### Natural Heritage Ranks:

State: **S2**

Global: **G3**

### Federal Agency Status:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:

U.S. Forest Service: **Sensitive**

U.S. Bureau of Land Management: **Sensitive**

This endangered species is found in the Yellowstone River but not in Gartside Reservoir, so the proposed project would not affect this species.

## 6. *Polyodon spatula* (Paddlefish).

### Natural Heritage Ranks:

State: **S1S2**

Global: **G4**

### Federal Agency Status:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:

U.S. Forest Service:

U.S. Bureau of Land Management: **Sensitive**

This endangered species is found in the Yellowstone River but not in Gartside Reservoir, so the proposed project would not affect this species.

## 7. *Macrhybopsis meeki* (Sicklefin Chub).

### Natural Heritage Ranks:

State: **S2**

Global: **G5**

### Federal Agency Status:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:

U.S. Forest Service: **Sensitive**

U.S. Bureau of Land Management: **Sensitive**

This endangered species is found in the Yellowstone River but not in Gartside Reservoir, so the proposed project would not affect this species.

## 8. *Sphaeromeria argentea* (Silky Prairie Clover).

### Natural Heritage Ranks:

State: **S1**

Global: **G5**

### Federal Agency Status:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:

U.S. Forest Service:

U.S. Bureau of Land Management: **Sensitive**

This species has been documented in the Gartside Reservoir FAS area, but is not found along the shoreline where the proposed project would take place. Also, all construction would occur in areas that are already heavily trafficked and disturbed.

*Interested parties may contact MFWP Region 7 offices for a detailed map of sensitive species Element Occurrences (EOs).*

Information courtesy of Montana Natural Heritage Program.

**ATTACHMENT A**  
**TOURISM REPORT (Dept of Commerce)**  
**MONTANA ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (MEPA)/HB495**

The Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks has initiated the review process as mandated by HB495 and the Montana Environmental Policy Act in its consideration of the project described below. As part of the review process, input and comments are being solicited. Please complete the project name and project description portions and submit this form to:

Victor Bjornberg, Tourism Development Coordinator  
Travel Montana-Department of Commerce  
PO Box 200533  
1424 9<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Helena, MT 59620-0533

**Project Name:** Gartside FAS Fishing Pier Replacement Project

**Project Location:** Gartside FAS, Richland County.

**Project Description:** Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks proposes to replace a damaged ADA-accessible fishing pier at Gartside FAS with a sturdier design. The old pier was damaged by ice movement on the reservoir, and has been unusable since the winter of 2005. The new design includes a cable-mat reinforced spit of land created from the reservoir bed that would extend the pier out into the reservoir by about 20 ft. The pier would be linked to the existing ADA-accessible latrine and parking space by concrete sidewalk.

1. Would this site development project have an impact on the tourism economy?  
NO YES If YES, briefly describe:

Project, as described, would restore access and fishing pier services for visitors which would provide benefits to the area's tourism economy.

2. Does this impending improvement alter the quality or quantity of recreation/tourism opportunities and settings?  
NO YES If YES, briefly describe:

Project restores the quantity of recreation & tourism opportunities at this site.

Signature Victor A. Bjornberg, Tourism Development Coordinator, MT Commerce Dept.  
Date August 3, 2006